

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended to correct a clerical error, addressing the Examiner's objection at page 2 of the Office Action.

Claims 1, 7-10, 12, and 41-43 are pending.

Claims 1, 7-10, 12 and 41-43 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 1,914,736 to Coutu ("Coutu") in view of U.S. Patent No. 1,532,195 to Morrison ("Morrison"). Claims 1 and 41 are independent.

The Examiner states that "it would be obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Coutu so that the retaining ring was threadably connected to a surface of the socket adjacent to the ball since this type of connection is considered equivalent to a connection to the outer surface of the socket as taught by Morrison."

Page 4 of the Office Action.

Claim 1

Applicant has discovered a flexible joint assembly including a first pivot joint and second pivot joint, each including a retaining ring compressing a seal by threadably connecting to a surface of the socket adjacent to the central fluid conductor and the ball. The central fluid conductor couples a first ball and a second ball. See claim 1. Not only does Coutu not describe or suggest a retaining ring compressing a seal member, or sealing member, by threadably connecting to a surface of the socket, or receiving member, adjacent to a central fluid connector, Coutu does not describe or suggest a central fluid conductor that couples a first ball and a second ball. Neither does Morrison. Thus, independent claim 1, and claims that depend from it are patentable over the combination of Coutu with Morrison.

Claim 41

Applicant has discovered a flexible joint assembly including a first pivot joint and second pivot joint, each including a retaining ring compressing the supporting member and the sealing member by threadably connecting to a surface of the receiving member adjacent to the central fluid connector and the inner member. See claim 1. Coutu does not describe or suggest a retaining ring compressing a sealing member by threadably connecting to a surface of a receiving member adjacent to a central fluid connector. Neither does Morrison. In Morrison, the three

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configurations are exterior surfaces of a socket. See Figures 1-3 of Morrison. Independent claim 41 describes a threadable connection to the surface of the receiving member adjacent to the central fluid connector, which is a surface interior to the receiving member. There is no description or suggestion of this configuration in Coutu or Morrison, or their combination. Thus, independent claim 41, and claims that depend from it, are patentable over the combination of Coutu with Morrison.

Accordingly, claims 1 and 41, and claims that depend therefrom, are patentable over Coutu combined with Morrison. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Applicants believe all claims should be allowed. Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 19-4293.

Respectfully submitted,

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